

Macbeth, Act I, Scene iii

A heath near Forres.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches

First Witch

Where hast thou been, sister?

Second Witch

Killing swine.

Third Witch

Sister, where thou?

First Witch

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd:--

'Give me,' quoth I:

5

'Aroint thee, witch!' the rump-fed ronyon cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

And, like a rat without a tail,

I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

10

Second Witch

I'll give thee a wind.

First Witch

Thou'rt kind.

Third Witch

And I another.

First Witch

I myself have all the other,

And the very ports they blow,

15

All the quarters that they know

I' the shipman's card.

I will drain him dry as hay:

Sleep shall neither night nor day

Hang upon his pent-house lid;

20

He shall live a man forbid:

Weary se'nnights nine times nine

Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:

Though his bark cannot be lost,

Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

25

Look what I have.

Second Witch

Show me, show me.

First Witch

Here I have a pilot's thumb,

Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

Drum within

Third Witch

A drum, a drum! 30
Macbeth doth come.

ALL

The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine 35
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO

MACBETH

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO

How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire, 40
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women, 45
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Second Witch

All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch

All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter! 50

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction 55
Of noble having and of royal hope,

That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear 60
Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch

Hail!

Second Witch

Hail!

Third Witch

Hail!

First Witch

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

65

Second Witch

Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH

Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:

70

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king

Stands not within the prospect of belief,

No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence

75

You owe this strange intelligence? or why

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way

With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

Witches vanish

BANQUO

The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,

And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?

80

MACBETH

Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted

As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO

Were such things here as we do speak about?

Or have we eaten on the insane root

That takes the reason prisoner?

85

MACBETH

Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO

You shall be king.

MACBETH

And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

BANQUO

To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?